

Psalm 11

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[0 : 00] If you have a Bible with you, then I want to invite you to turn to the book of Psalms.

In fact, we're going to be this morning in Psalm 11. If you don't have a Bible with you, then I'd encourage you to grab one of the Bibles that are scattered around in the chairs around you. And in fact, if you have a translation other than the one that I typically preach from, which is called the English Standard Version, you might want to grab one of those Bibles anyway because it may be easier for you to follow along because the wording will be identical with what I'm going to read here.

If you do grab one of those Bibles, all you have to do is turn to page 452 and you'll find Psalm 11 right there. As you get there, fellas, guys, I want you to stand to your feet and we'll read God's Word together.

Psalm 11, to the choir master of David. In the Lord I take refuge. How can you say to my soul, flee like a bird to your mountain?

For behold, the wicked bend the bow. They have fitted their arrow to the string to shoot in the dark at the upright in heart. If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do? The Lord is in His holy temple.

[1 : 22] The Lord's throne is in heaven. His eyes see. His eyelids test the children of man. The Lord tests the righteous. But His soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence.

Let Him rain coals on the wicked. Fire and sulfur and a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup. For the Lord is righteous. He loves righteous deeds.

The upright shall behold His face. Father, that's what we want to do this morning. We want to behold Your face. And so we pray that You would show us the way to doing just that.

We ask this in Christ's name. Amen. You guys take a seat. For those of you who are visiting with us, I want to let you know that typically what we do on a Sunday morning is we go through books of the Bible.

We just go verse by verse through books of the Bible. So for instance, we've gone through the book of Mark. That took us a little over a year to do that. We've been through 1 Peter. We are right now in the middle of the book of Romans, but we have taken a break for the summer from the book of Romans to jump back to the Old Testament to the book of Psalms.

[2 : 34] So that over the years, if we cover enough Psalms a year, we will eventually get through the book of Psalms. So we're going to cover several Psalms this summer. And we happen this week to be in Psalm 11.

Psalm 11 is a great Psalm because it offers us encouragement even when around us things tend to be discouraging. I want you to take a look at the first verse here.

I want you to see what David says as he looks at the troubles that surround him. The first words of David here are, In the Lord I take refuge.

That's something that we will see all over the place throughout the book of Psalms. Oftentimes, the Lord is called the psalmist's refuge or his rock, his shield, his protector, the place to which he runs to find safety and security.

I was thinking about that this morning because it is Father's Day. And I was thinking about how often young children will look to their dad as their place of refuge, their place of safety, a place where they can be protected.

[3 : 37] And so, you know, a lot of times if a kid, if a small child is hurt, if he scratches his knee, if he bumps his head on something, a lot of times they'll run immediately to mom.

But if there's something really scary happening, then a lot of times they'll cry out for dad because there's sort of this innate understanding in them that I can go to somebody bigger and stronger who can take care of things.

But of course, there's always a point in time in your life when you realize, my dad can't protect me all the time. Maybe it's because your dad is no longer around. I woke up this morning, sat on the edge of my bed, and the first number that came to my head was the number 14.

This is the 14th Father's Day since I lost my dad. He died when I was only 23 years old. So 14 years now I've been without him. And some of you have gone your entire lives without your dad.

And so that concept of a dad as a place of refuge and safety and protection is foreign to you. But whether you've had your dad for a long time or a short period of time or no period of time, we all know that there are limits to what any person can do for us.

[4 : 40] We all know that there are times when there's no person in our lives, there's no father figure, there's no one to whom we can turn that we know can protect us from the things in the world that surround us.

And that's when the first line of this song is a good reminder that there is a better protector, there is a better provider, there is one stronger than any earthly father that we may or may not have had.

David just simply begins this song by confessing, the Lord is my refuge. He is my place of safety. And he's not saying that in a vacuum.

He's not saying that in the midst of happy times when things are going well. Because you hear next the temptation that David faces to abandon God as a place of refuge.

The temptation that David faces to find another place of safety, to find some other way to deal with the things that are happening to him. Now we really have no idea what exactly was going on in David's life at this time.

[5 : 45] We know that this psalm was composed by David because before we even get to verse 1, we are told that this is in fact a psalm of David. But we're not given any other information.

Sometimes in the psalms, just before the psalm begins, we'll be given some sort of historical information about what was happening. Well, David wrote this song when this was happening. Or so and so wrote this song at this period in Israel's history.

But sometimes, as we find here in Psalm 11, we're only given really the name. We're given a little bit of musical information to the choir master so that we know this is a song meant to be sung.

But we really don't know the circumstances that David faced. We could imagine, because there are a number of instances throughout the Scriptures in the Old Testament when we read about David's exploits. And in the midst of those exploits, we see David facing trials over and over again.

Trials before he became the king. Trials after he became the king. We don't know at what point in his life David was faced with a temptation to abandon God as a place of safety and refuge.

[6 : 47] But that may be a good thing. Because sometimes if we can identify a particular event in the writer's life, sometimes we will or we will not identify with the events in their lives.

Sometimes we just can't find ourselves in the place of the writer of Scripture in a particular portion of Scripture. And so we have a difficult time relating to it. But here we're not given that information.

So that we can sort of use our imaginations or we can fit ourselves into the situation in which David was. So whatever it might be happening in your life right now, or whatever it might be that happens in your life a month from now, or a year from now, you can reflect on this psalm and you can connect to this psalm in a very real, authentic way.

You can sort of take your circumstances and read them into David's situation because he gives us a way of looking at the world and facing this temptation that I think is applicable in whatever situation we might face, whatever trouble might come upon us, whatever difficulties you might have to deal with.

David does in fact face the temptation though to abandon this idea of God as a refuge. Take a look at what he says in the second part of verse 1. He says, How can you say to my soul, Flee like a bird to your mountain?

[8 : 05] Now we don't know, honestly, if David is actually talking to another person. Maybe this happened when David was the king. And maybe one of David's counselors came to him and said, My king, there's a lot of things happening and there's a lot of trouble.

You need to flee. You need to run away. You need to get away from this situation. We really don't know. It could in fact be that David is just having sort of an inner monologue with himself, an inner dialogue here, with himself where he's saying to himself, How can you say to yourself, Flee, run away, get away?

We don't really know. But the point is that he's tempted not to trust in God as a place of safety. He's tempted rather to flee to another place. Flee like a bird to your mountain.

Flee. So my boys have, over the last couple of months, I don't know how long it's been, but they have really become obsessed with this show called The Wildcrats. Anybody here seen The Wildcrats?

Anybody outside? I know everybody in my family has dealt with The Wildcrats. Anybody outside these first two rows in the middle? You guys are familiar with The Wildcrats? Okay. So it's a cartoon, and it's basically a nature show where they investigate all these animals and discover the various creature powers that they have and these things that very unique animals can do.

[9 : 20] And so Eli is the one, most of the time, who remembers all the facts about the animals. They all remember random strange things. But he's coming to me, Do you know how fast this raptor can descend? No, I have no idea how fast this raptor can go.

But one thing that I have learned from watching both The Wildcrats and an episode of MacGyver a couple of weeks ago is that these birds, they make their nests really high in the mountains and mountainous areas because they're safe.

They're safe from any predator. Nothing can get to them when they're in their nest really high up in the mountains. I know we don't relate to that here because it's ridiculously flat around here. It was a little bit depressing coming back from Tennessee and the Smoky Mountains.

It just kept getting flatter and flatter the closer that I got to Houston until it was just very, very flat. But there are places where they have mountains, and birds actually do this.

And Israel is a place that's fairly mountainous. Not like the Rocky Mountains, big giant mountains, but there are a lot of hills. And so this would have been familiar imagery to David and to others in Israel that the birds would flee to the tops of the mountains.

[10 : 24] There they could run away from predators. There they could often get away from whatever natural disasters. If there's a flood happening down below, they simply need to go to their nests at the top of the mountain. And so this is a familiar image in which a bird would seek sanctuary above all the troubles of the world.

It would basically run away from all of its problems. And David is here faced with the temptation to simply run, to simply get away, to flee like a bird to your mountain.

And the reason is obvious. There are people who intend to do harm to him. There are people coming against David with ill intentions. Notice what it says in verse 2. In other words, there's nothing you can do about this, David.

You can't defeat this enemy. You can't face this enemy. In fact, you can't see this enemy. They're going to shoot at you in the dark. You can't even see where they're coming from. So it's a real issue, a real problem that David's facing.

And the answer to this problem is not apparent to him. In fact, the answer that's given to him perhaps occurs to him himself is, it's such a hidden danger, you can't see it.

[11 : 41] It's a real threat. The best thing to do is to simply run away. But David does not run away. In fact, David's opening line remains true for him throughout the song.

That the Lord is, in fact, his refuge. And verses 4 through 7 are designed to help us see how it is that David, in the midst of these troubles, clings to God as a place of refuge.

How does David avoid the temptation to turn to other things for safety and for protection? How does David avoid the temptation to abandon his faith in God and all that God can do in order to embrace other things or in order to just simply cower in the corner?

How is David able to continue to cling to God as his place of refuge? And David's means of doing that is simply to think about and to reflect upon who God is.

It greatly matters what kind of God you serve when you face trials. Because if you serve a God who's powerless to help you in that situation, then you won't have a whole lot of hope that he'll be able to get you out of it.

[12 : 54] Or if you believe in a God who's not involved in these situations, if you believe in a God who would never, in any way, will for anything bad to come into your life and anything bad that comes against you has happened just in a way that's caught him off guard or he would like to stop it but he can't, you're going to find yourself hopeless and in need of some other refuge in the midst of trouble.

But that's not the kind of God that David serves. In fact, I want us to sort of work our way backwards beginning in verse 7 and look at a few things that David points out that are true about the God that he serves.

So take a look in verse 7. David says that the Lord is righteous. Now you'll notice over and over throughout this psalm the word Lord is spelled in all capital letters.

Sometimes in the Old Testament you'll simply have a capital L and then lowercase letters after it and when that's the case it's a word that really just genuinely means Lord or Sovereign One or King or something along those lines.

But when you see it like this in all capital letters at that point you know that this is God's name. This is his covenant name that he gave to the people of Israel, Yahweh or in older translations sometimes rendered as Jehovah.

[14 : 12] This is God's covenant name by which he made himself known to his people. And so David is specifically identifying his God the God that he knows the God with whom he is in covenant relationship.

He's identifying his God as in fact a righteous God. And that implies all sorts of things that we sometimes find to be a bit uncomfortable.

That implies all sorts of things about God that we would often times in our culture today we would rather not think about. And if there's any one aspect of God's character that David speaks of in this psalm that I think a lot of times the gods of people in general the kinds of gods that we imagine in our head or the ways in which we imagine God to be if there's any characteristic that does not match up with the way that we've imagined God to be often times it is this phrase itself that the Lord is righteous.

Because notice what that means. It means of course in verse 7 it says that he loves righteous deeds. Well that's not a surprise a righteous person would delight in other people doing righteous things.

That's not a surprise at all. But move up to verse 5. The Lord tests the righteous but his soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence.

[15 : 32] That's not a popular statement. That's not a phrase that you're going to find anyone carving on a piece of wood and hanging outside their front door. This is not a verse that you're going to find written across people's computer screens or anywhere else.

This is not a popular statement to be made about God. That God actually hates the wicked and the one who loves violence. Yes, God is capable of actual real hate.

It's not the kind of hate that we experience. It's a fleeting thing that comes and goes simply because someone has done something to us. No, God's righteousness is itself God's commitment to uphold and preserve his own glory.

That's what his righteousness is. God with all of his being is committed to the absolute preservation and upholding of his own glory so that anything that would detract from God's glory or anyone that would refuse to give God the glory that he deserves is by definition unrighteous.

That's what it means to be wicked. It means to be a person who lives and thinks and feels in opposition to God and his glory that he rightly deserves.

[16 : 46] That's why Paul is able to say in Romans 3.23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. To sin is to live or think in such a way that you do not give to God the honor and glory that he rightly deserves.

And God is so jealous to uphold and preserve his own glory that his righteousness means that not only does he love righteous deeds but he hates the wicked and the one who loves violence.

I know that it's popular for us to often say well you should hate sin and love the sinner and I think that's true for us on a human level because we ourselves are sinners and we don't look at anybody else regardless of their lifestyle and regardless of what they've done we don't look at other people and think I hate you because of who you are we ought not to do that because we ourselves are sinners our sins may take us in a different trajectory than other people but we're all fallen we're all sinful people but when we project that onto God we end up twisting what the Bible has to say about who he is the Bible does not say that God merely hates sin but loves the sinner the Bible says simultaneously that yes God loves sinners but he also hates the wicked he also hates sinners this is God's righteousness this is what it looks like to say the Lord is righteous but thankfully those are not the only things that David reveals to us about God that's not the only thing that David tells us about God because if all David said is the Lord is righteous he loves righteous deeds and he hates the wicked then David is in trouble the last thing that David would want to do is run to a righteous God as a place of refuge if that's the only thing that he knows about this God because God would in fact not be a place of refuge if nothing else were true about him

David is himself wicked David is himself a sinner it was David who stole another man's wife and had that man killed David is guilty of a number of things the Bible is not silent on the sins of saints it's not it tells us it gives us in bold colors the things that others have done wrong and we see that throughout scripture we see men that we uphold often times as heroes and we probably ought to but we see their sinfulness as well in the Bible and David is one of those so that if all David has to say about God as God's righteous which means he loves righteous deeds and he hates the wicked then David could not say in verse 1 the Lord is my refuge he could not say that because the Lord would only be a place for David's destruction because when sinners come into the presence of a righteous God it can only be the undoing of sinners I'm actually getting ahead of myself though and jumping into my next point so I'll move up a few verses verses 4 verse 4 reveals two more things that I want us to meditate on as we think about who God is first of all we see in verse 4 that the

Lord is in his holy temple the Lord is in his holy temple we don't think about temples very often today we usually think of as some strange thing connected with foreign religions that we don't really understand that we don't have any connection to but in Israel in ancient Israel the temple was the center of their entire religious life even before they had a stone temple built in the city of Jerusalem they had a portable temple that they called the tabernacle that they moved from place to place which in fact is what David has in mind because the stone temple will be built by Solomon David's son so David has in mind when he mentions the temple he has in mind this movable tabernacle that Israel would take from place to place and the tabernacle or the temple was set up in such a way that it would reveal God's holiness to his people so that you had within the very center of the tabernacle you had the holy of holies this is the place where the ark of the covenant was kept which you'll know about if you've watched all the Indiana

[21 : 05] Jones movies but the ark of the covenant was the place where God actually made his presence known among his people in ancient Israel but the ark of the covenant was kept inside the innermost room of the temple or of the tabernacle and then outside of that there was a wider courtyard and then outside of that there was a wider courtyard and eventually when the stone temple was built there was another courtyard outside of that and as you moved closer to the center of the temple it was pared down the number of people who could actually go in there so that when they had the temple at its widest the furthest most courtyard was the court of the gentiles and gentiles who were considered to be god fearers that is they believed in the god of Israel but they were not jews gentiles could be in the outermost courtyard the courtyard of the gentiles but then you had the court of the women in which both jewish men and women could enter but then inside of that you could only allow jewish men and then inside in the very center of the temple in the holy of holies only those who were a part of the priesthood could enter and of them only one person a year the man who was designated high priest could enter into the holy of holies so that the temple was constructed in such a way that the further you went into the temple the fewer people were allowed to draw near and the more difficult it was to pass clearance and the point of that was to stress to the people that

God is not to be approached in a haphazard way God is not to be approached casually not just anyone can come into the presence of God because the temple for ancient Israel symbolized two things at the same time it symbolized that God was indeed present among his people God did manifest himself his spirit came down upon the ark of the!

covenant in the holy of holies that was where God accepted sacrifices made for sins so that the temple itself told the people of Israel God is uniquely present among us in a way that he is not present among the other nations of the world every Israelite in ancient Israel knew that and those who were faithful hoped in that trusted in God's presence there in the temple in fact as a sign of God's judgment later on in Israel's history because the people of Israel had made sacrifices to false gods and had worshipped false gods as sort of the final straws the final sign of God's judgment upon the people of Israel God sent in Babylon to destroy the temple in Jerusalem and God made it known through the prophets I have departed from you I am no longer right now currently present with you in the ways in which I have been in the past the temple is gone the ark of the covenant is gone and

I am not present among you in the ways that I have been in the past because that was what the temple really taught the people is that God was uniquely present yes God's what we call omnipresent that means God is everywhere all the time but when the Bible often speaks of God's presence but it also represented that this God who was present among Israel was not one to be messed with he was not to be trifled with that's why it's not just that the Lord is in his temple the Lord is in we are told his holy temple for God to be holy is for him to be set apart it is for him to be too pure!

to be looked upon with sinful eyes Israel understood that at least in the better parts of their history so that when God made his presence known to Moses on Mount Sinai you remember the story the Israelites have left the land of Egypt and they're out in the wilderness and God gathers them together at Mount Sinai and it was on Mount Sinai that God gave to Moses the Ten commandments and the other commandments that we have but as God was meeting with Moses as God was giving to Moses the commandments God instructed the people of Israel do not come near to the mountain granted I'm revealing myself to Moses at the top of the mountain but my mere presence at the top of the mountain meeting with Moses means that this entire mountain!

[25 : 37] is now off limits and if you touch this! you will die!! the holiness of God is a frightening thing if you understand it rightly in fact there's a story in the Old Testament about a priest who mistakenly reached out and touched the Ark of the Covenant as the Ark was being transported from one point to another the priest was attempting to steady the Ark as it was about to fall into the mud and yet as God views that God views it and says that it would have been better for the Ark to have fallen into the mud than for unclean sinful hands to touch this place of his unique presence and as the priest touches the Ark the priest dies just as anyone who would have touched the mountain would have died because God's holiness and God's righteousness are a frightening thing yes God was uniquely present among his people in the temple and revealed himself there but that presence was not one that they took lightly not just assumed that anyone could trudge up into the holy of holies and have a meeting with

God no they knew better in fact there is a story that many of you are familiar with in the book of Isaiah and I invite you to turn to Isaiah chapter 6 that gives us probably the clearest picture of God's holiness in all of scripture Isaiah chapter 6 if you're using one of the Bibles that we have in the chairs it's page 571 and in Isaiah chapter 6 the prophet Isaiah has an encounter with God and it's almost striking the way that the language of Isaiah chapter 6 reflects the language of Psalm 11 we see a lot of the same terminology we read in verse 1 of Isaiah 6 that in the year that King Uzziah died this is Isaiah speaking I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne there's this throne language we're about to see in a moment in Psalm 11 high and lifted up and the train of his robe filled the temple so he's this vision that Isaiah is having of the Lord takes place in the temple he's seeing God reveal manifest himself in the temple and in verse 2 we are told that above him stood the seraphim well that's a strange word it's translated in different ways in your translations it's a word used to describe particular angelic beings that we find here and there in the Old Testament but literally this Hebrew word means the burning ones those who are in God's presence these angelic beings who are in God's presence are themselves by God's presence made so holy and pure they appear to Isaiah to be like flaming creatures the burning ones each of these seraphim had six wings with two he covered his face with two he covered his feet and with two he flew so we see these angelic beings who appear as flames to Isaiah with wings and even these angelic beings cover their eyes when God's holiness is manifested in the temple even these exalted themselves set apart and holy in a sense beings cover their eyes verse 3 they called out to one another holy holy holy holy is the Lord of hosts the whole earth is full of his glory now move down to verse 5

I want you to see Isaiah's response to this vision of God's holiness in the temple I said woe is me for I'm lost for I'm a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips for my eyes have seen the king the lord of hosts Isaiah's response when he comes into contact with a vision of God and God's holiness is I am undone the purity of God the holiness of God the otherness of God is too much for me as a mere sinful human being to take in and I am unraveling at the seams I am undone and the only answer to Isaiah's trouble as a sinner in the presence of God is God himself intervening and cleansing Isaiah of his sins look at verse 6 then one of the seraphim flew to me having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar and he touched my mouth and said behold this has touched your lips your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for it's significant sinners do not come into God's presence unless their sin is atoned for that means that if their sin is not paid for if their sin is not dealt with then they will not survive

God's presence they won't survive and you and I are no different from Isaiah you and I would not be able like David to cry out to God as a place of refuge even if his presence were manifested among us in a special unique way because it is a holy presence we would not survive were we not cleansed and forgiven in the gospel of John we read that Jesus became flesh the word in John chapter 1 verse 14 tells us that the word became flesh and dwelt among us literally the word is he tabernacled among us so that in the Old Testament the tabernacle is the place of God's presence the temple is the place of God's presence but the place of God's presence in the temple like Isaiah for the rest of Israel was also the place where their sins were atoned for where sacrifices were made but under the new covenant there is a new temple there is a new tabernacle and it's not a building on a hill in Jerusalem it is Jesus himself who came and tabernacled among us and he has the writer of Hebrews tells us he has made a sacrifice once for all and just as Isaiah was only able to endure

God's holy presence because his sins were cleansed and wiped away so we can only come into God's presence and cling to God as a place of refuge as David does if in fact we come through Jesus the new temple the new tabernacle who has Paul tells us become sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God that's gospel that's good news the good news is that God can be our place of refuge we can actually do more than the ancient Israelites could because we can come into the holiest of places we can come into the presence of Jesus himself we can be united to Jesus by faith and all of our sins are paid for all of our wickedness is covered over and washed away so that when David says in Psalm 11 that the Lord is in his holy temple David is making an assumption David's assumption about himself is that he is among those whose sins have been atoned for and I wonder if you could make that same assumption this morning

[33 : 03] I wonder if we all here have trusted in Christ trusted in his sacrifice on the cross for us so that God might become for us not a place of fear but a place of safety and refuge if you have not trusted in Jesus and if his sacrifice has not paid for your sins and if his righteousness has not become your own then God is not your refuge but I invite you to trust in him so that he might become a place of refuge and not a place of fear David goes on he says in the middle of verse 4 not only is the Lord in his holy temple but he says that the Lord's throne is in heaven he says his eyes see his eyelids eyelids test the children of men it is not simply merely that God reveals himself to us and makes his presence known to us that's good news but we face struggles do we not

David is faced with real problems and with a real temptation to abandon his trust in the Lord because of those problems and one of the things that David would have us know if we are to cling to God as a place of refuge is that we have to know and be secure in the fact that God is on his heavenly throne which is another way of saying that God is indeed sovereign the things that happen to us the bad circumstances that we face the painful circumstances that we face they do not take God by surprise they do not happen because he is resting and he hasn't bothered to do anything about it they do not happen without his permission they do not happen apart from his sovereign will because he sits upon the throne at all times you notice as a part of Isaiah's vision that that vision began in a time of trouble for Isaiah because the king Uzziah had died and turmoil was in the kingdom and what Isaiah saw initially was the

Lord sitting upon his throne as if to say Isaiah I know that the king is dead but the true king is still on his throne I'm not surprised by the death of Uzziah I determine when men die I'm not surprised by any of the troubles that you face which I think is the point of him elaborating on God sitting on a throne by saying that God's eyes see and his eyelids test the children of man God sees God knows what is happening and in fact the things that God sees are not things that he sees as a spectator his eyelids that is as he looks intently at things the things that are happening in the world are God testing his own people these are not things that just randomly happen and then God comes in afterwards and he makes something good out of it this is God sovereign in control and the things that happen in the lives of those who trust in Jesus the bad things even come into our lives as a test from the

Lord verse 5 the Lord tests the righteous those who belong to him the Lord tests the reality is that whether or not you are a Christian you will struggle in this world that I mean that's just true whether or not you are a Christian you will at some point in your life face adversity whether it comes in the form of some sort of illness or whether it comes in the form of losing your job or whether it comes in the form of trouble with your children or financial difficulties or whatever I couldn't even name all of the possibilities of the things that you would face even speaking in general terms like that there are so many struggles that people face and such a wide variety of struggles that we face that we can be guaranteed that whether or not we are a follower of Jesus we are going to face some troubling times in our lives but if you are a follower of Christ if the Lord is indeed your refuge and if his righteousness belongs to you so that in

God's sight you can be called righteous if that is true then you know that all of those struggles and trials are but God testing you or another way to translate this word is proving you the writer of Hebrews tells us that God disciplines those whom he loves he disciplines his spiritual children and in the midst of that testing your faith is proven genuine and real when you run to him as your refuge rather than abandoning your faith and pursuing other sources of safety this is a psalm that is designed to bolster your confidence to increase your trust in the Lord by simply showing you who this Lord is and if you can understand that he is indeed righteous and yet his righteousness and his holiness do not have to be a thing to fear if we are in Christ and have had our sins paid for if we can know that and if we can know that his presence is among his people uniquely in a way that he's not present in the rest of the world and that in fact he sits on his throne sovereignly governing the course of human history and even your life then you can trust in him no matter what might come your way and David's confession in the Lord

[38 : 53] I take refuge can be your confession on the other hand if you refuse to trust in him and if in fact your troubles become to you evidence that he either is not in existence at all or that he simply doesn't care and you have no desire to have any sort of relationship with this God there is a warning the Lord's soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence let him rain coals on the wicked fire and sulfur and a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup that's the exact same kind of language that Jesus uses over and over in the gospels fire and sulfur to describe the ultimate final wrath of God upon those whose sins have not been forgiven through Jesus the Lord can be a place of refuge for you in Christ or ultimately the cup of his wrath can be yours and I encourage you trust in him trust in all that he has done and his righteousness will be sweet and not fearful and his presence will be welcome and not a thing to run from and his power and sovereignty will be a place of rejoicing and not running let's pray and not to to to to to to to to to to!